



Medical Services Waste

Technical Guidance Document SW 00-01

This guidance document will outline the acceptable practices for handling, storage, and disposal of medical services waste so that Health or Medical Facility managers can make informed decisions about medical waste management.

Background

The primary reason for reviewing medical services waste management is the proposed Hospital/Medical/Infectious Waste Incinerator (HMIWI) regulations which the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) plans to adopt in 2000. EPA will enforce federal regulations if KDHE does not adopt state regulations.

Affected facilities will have one year to comply with these regulations which will require expensive stack testing for emissions. This will probably result in the closure of many small medical waste incinerators. Many Health Facility managers must explore other management options for the processing or disposal of medical waste.

Medical waste issues are complicated by the lack of uniformity between regulatory agencies. EPA, USDOT, OSHA, and KDHE each have their own definitions and regulations. Terminology includes regulated medical waste, infectious waste, biohazard waste, and (in Kansas) medical services waste. OSHA specifically regulates under the Bloodborne Pathogen Rule.

In Kansas, medical services waste means those solid waste materials which are potentially capable of causing disease or injury and which are generated in connection with human or animal care through inpatient and outpatient services (K.A.R. 28-29-27).

Management of Medical Services Waste

Medical services waste should be managed according to the following standards:

- The medical waste must be placed in containers which are: closable, constructed to contain all contents and prevent leakage of fluids, and closed prior to removal. The containers must be labeled or color-coded as specified by 29 CFR 1910.130. The labels must have the **BIOHAZARD** legend. Red bags or red containers may be substituted for labels.
- The facility may process the medical waste by incineration or by sterilization using autoclaving, microwaving, chemical treatment, or other approved methods. If the potential to cause disease or injury is removed, then the waste can be mixed with general solid waste and transported to a Municipal Solid Waste Landfill (MSWLF).
- If the medical waste is not processed:
 - 1) the facility may obtain a Special Waste Disposal Authorization per K.A.R. 28-29-109 and transport the medical waste separately to a MSWLF; or
 - 2) the facility may contract with a medical waste company for transportation and disposal of the medical waste to a MSWLF (with SWDA) or to a permitted medical waste processing facility.

For additional information regarding proper management of solid waste, you may contact the Bureau of Waste Management at (785)296-1600 or the address at the top of this document.

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